THE HAMPDEN HIPPOCRAT

The Hampden District Medical Society Newsletter

SPRING 2000 VOLUME 3 Page 1

President's message:

"Visionary Finale..."

by Claudia L Koppelman, M.D.

This writing represents the final message to which I shall address the membership as HDMS President.

So...not one to miss an opportunity to stand on a soapbox I will try once again to enlighten you with my visionary candor. It is also the perfect opportunity to conclude my seven article series, which began 21 months ago in September 1998 with "Visionary Choices" in which I proposed that in order to build onto the past a bridge to the future, perceptive choices in the present were required. With words I wove a narrative tapestry intertwining the past, present and future. Three ever changing points along the continuum of time. Tomorrow is the future we look forward to today, and so the choices made in the present quickly become tomorrow's past. Failing to look beyond the boundaries of defined space and time has potentiated the negative effect of having made choices by passive acceptance throughout the entire health care system in America.

Over my two years as president I have tried to eloquently tell you that there is not one person who will save the profession, not one person to blame for the destruction of medicine and not one organization that failed to protect the practice of medicine or one that allowed the profession to be degraded to merely another consumer oriented business.

There was not one, but many ones that simply allowed the invasion of the business world to dictate the fate of the House of Medicine.

There was not one. There were many ones.

Those ones were composed of every single physician whose apathy, submission, and yes even greed caused them to ignore the warnings of doom.

Those ones were composed of every single physician who felt someone else should protect the profession because they were too busy practicing medicine.

Those ones were composed of every single physician in the United States that simply never questioned why and readily complied.

Those ones were composed of physicians who assumed the ethical obligations in medicine would be respected.

Those ones were composed of physicians who simply assumed too much and objected to nothing.

Is it too late to reign in control, reduce bureaucratic oversight and paperwork and return respect and the practice of medicine to physicians?

Is the power of money stronger than the desire for doing what's right for patients and the country?

Is my theory of a governmental conspiracy to knock off the elderly, put the baby boomers on communes in the mountains to fend for ourselves, and reduce not only the physician knowledge base but replace physicians with alternative providers simply to save money, or in others terms make money for investment capitalists and keep the politics of consumerism alive, really true?

We must all seriously consider this possibility.

Our elected officials vote themselves the best health insurance coverage for life and full pay retirement plans paid straight from the General Funds, taxpayers hard earned money, so what incentives really exist to correct HCFA's inequities, Social Security, and Health System Reform.

We must consider my theory possible.

When spending over thirteen billion dollars on a tunnel under Boston is considered more important than health, education and humanity. A tunnel which by the way is going to flood when the polar cap melts and the new coastline is in our backyard, lovely Holyoke in Western Massachusetts.

Well...if you are waiting for the answers don't hold your breath because I only have suggestions for how to prepare yourself for survival in the 21st century.

First, just in case the practice of humane medicine is totally destroyed by outside forces I recommend physicians acquire the following reading material for their library.

To continue practicing the "Art of Medicine" and still make a living the following trio will be essential:

Reflexology...Healing Through Touch or otherwise known as "clients willingly pay out of pocket, physical exams" complimented by: Herbal Medicine Equivalents of Pharmaceuticals No One Can Afford.

When the occasion arises to refer a patient to a specialist, the only truly reliable reference available is Guide to Locating REAL Physicians, published by, I Earned My Degree in Medical School , M.D. Underground Press.

To break those life long habits of doing everything you are told without question you simply must read The Official U.S. Government Printing Press copy of Fraud and Abuse for Medical Professionals Only: The Complete Do as We Say, Not as We Follow Version,

Never worry again about insurance downcoding and audits as long as you have Creative Writing 101 for Medical Documentation or better yet Mix and Match Generic Progress Notes guaranteed to comply with everything and everybody.

Finally the book you absolutely must acquire in order to survive 21st century medicine is Computer Hacker's Guide for Dummies so you can correct all the processing errors the insurers just can't seem to fix.

On a more serious note, the most important treatment tool for the immediate future, as " Star Trek Tricorders" are still light years away from being developed, actually comes from the past.

You should become thoroughly knowledgeable with its use because your services will only be sought when it fails.

Known as a 'Healing Wand' it is the answer to Medicare and Social Security solvency for eternity.

When properly matched with its owner, which involves selection of the correct healing ingredients and phantom crystal, which will compliment gene selection techniques of the future, it has the ability to remove all stress causing energies from your being thereby alleviating all reasons for illness. Each individual American will be issued one at birth, according to a complex mathematical formula derived from their Social Security number. You know, the number that was not supposed to be used for identification purposes.

If one adds the first two numbers, subtracts from the third, adds the remaining six numbers and then divides by three the resulting number will represent the base number of your "Healing Wand". In my case that would equal seven.

To prove the validity of this formula and share with you that this system is being developed as a bipartisan plan for healthcare reform not to be revealed by mutual agreement until after the elections, I offer the following...
Seven is the number of letters in my name.
My apolitical life as a district delegate began seven years ago.
It was twenty one years ago I started my medical training, divided by three stages: student, resident, and now attending and I'm back at the number seven. The date I first delivered this seventh message was May 2nd, the sum of the month and day equals seven. I have had twenty-one months since September 1998 to present to you the important teachings held within three measures of time: past, present and future in which I wrote seven articles. There are seven letters in the words Medical, Doctors, Healing, Patient.
Coincidence or destiny? (must be destiny...7 letters).
As I have suggested in prior messages, the past holds answers for the future. To deliver the message for the future I originally asked Merlin to enlighten us, but due to lack of prior Arthurization he unfortunately could not comply. I did though receive a special delivery package from Camelot (seven letters) a crystal (seven letters) ball. Another useful diagnostic and treatment tool which can predict the future as well as perform miracles. I am sure you are all waiting patiently to read what the crystal ball revealed about the future of medicine...
Sorry folks, it's not Y2K compliant therefore I'm on my own to predict the future.
So, I will share with you my visionary thoughts which are not unlike those of many visionaries throughout time.
We have the power within each and every one of us to make this world a better place to live in for everyone. If we choose to do so, is the question. Mankind was bestowed with the faculty of speech, so that we might learn and teach. The best preacher is the heart and the best teacher is time. Everyday we use our gift of speech to make a difference in the lives of our patients and our profession.
It is written that if you save the life of one human being it is as if you saved mankind. To accept the responsibility of being a physician and being privileged to "touch" other human beings sets us apart from other professionals. To heal with medicine, a surgeons knife or to give comfort through a gentle touch or words are the ways we save mankind on a daily basis.
Although our mortal being will return to dust, our spirits remain in the minds of those whose lives we have touched. And we have all touched many lives, and will continue to touch the lives of those who seek our knowledge, those with whom we will never physically touch, and even those yet to be born.
Doctors.....others can succeed in controlling your destiny, only when you let them and when you forget why you became a physician.
The responsibility for allowing changes to occur or making change happen falls on each and every one of us.
I still believe in miracles, manmade ones. It is not too late to write tomorrow's story. From the famous words of Alan Jay Lerner, "Don't let it be forgot, That once there was a spot...
"Camelot exists in all of us, but it takes us all to make it our future".

p.s. To all members of HDMS I thank you for the gift given in appreciation of having served as HDMS's 158th President the past two years (1+5+8=14/2=7).
By the way, the lovely bronze sculpture is #7 of 30. Destiny?!

Claudia L. Koppelman, M.D., President HDMS 1998-2000

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In the quiet hours
just before dawn
the world is in balance
before we awaken
and disturb the silence.
Capture the meaning
of nature's gift
through harmony of sounds
the song of earth's wisdom
balanced on the edge of
silence.

clk 2000

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HDMS Sponsored Activities

(Unless otherwise specified meeting will be held at the HDMS Office)

Executive Board Meeting, Tuesday, June 20, 2000 6:15 p.m.

"Girl Scouts of Today, Physicians of Tomorrow",
Thursday, June 29, 2000
Deliso Center, Mercy Hospital

Committee on Public Health, Tuesday, September 12, 2000 Noon

Executive Board Meeting, Tuesday, September 19, 2000 6:15 p.m.

Medical-Legal Forum (TBD) Fall 2000

HDMS Fall District Meeting, Wednesday, September 27, 2000, 6 p.m.
Delaney House, Holyoke
"Organizational Barriers to Effective Pain Management"
By: *Scott S, Reuben, M.D.*
Director, Acute Pain Service
Associate Professor of Anesthesiology
Baystate Medical Center and the
Tufts University School of Medicine

HDMS Calender continued:

"DEA Presentation and Perspective"
By: *Lewis Fisher*
Diversion Program Manager
New England Field Division
Drug Enforcement Administration

Medical Ethics Seminar, Wednesday, October 25, 2000
Deliso Center, Mercy Hospital

Committee on Public Health, Tuesday, October 10, 2000 Noon

Executive Board Meeting, Tuesday, October 17, 2000 6:15 p.m.

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Suzanne Skibinski
Executive Director

Rosanna Czermak
Administrative Assistant

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HIPPOCRAT NEWSLETTER EDITOR: Claudia L. Koppelman

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"The Hampden Hippocrat Newsletter" is the news organ of the Hampden District Medical Society and is a forum for sharing information and opinions amongst the members for whom it is being created. Any article printed expresses the opinion of the author and should not be construed to imply endorsement by the HDMS.

Letters Policy

Letters to the editor should be approximately 250 words or less, preferably typed in Word and on a disk. The full name and address of the writer along with a signature for verification on a paper copy of the letter must be enclosed. All letters are subject to editing.

Please **mail** them addressed to the Editor , "The Hampden Hippocrat"
c/o HDMS 1111 Elm Street, Suite 22 W. Springfield, Ma 01089-1540

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Editor's Column

This issue represents the third Volume of our newsletter. There has been more interest and activity generated from the new format than the "Hippocrat" has seen in many years.
It is my hope that as we continue to bring interesting information to our members we will be able to develop a few permanent columns which members can look forward to reading.

At our Annual meeting held on May 2, 2000 the membership unanimously voted to adopt the amended Bylaws which provides for the publication of minimally three issues per calender year of The Hampden Hippocrat. These are being planned as Fall, Winter and Spring publications.

This issue is filled with information about the Annual meeting, the State of the Society Address delivered by the President (yours truly), and highlights of this past year's activities.
I have also included an article on Ehrlichiosis which I hope is not only interesting, but educational as I think we all will be encountering more patients in the future with this relatively newly recognized illness.
The Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices for the Massachusetts Department of Public Health has changed the age recommendation for FLU vaccination to include ALL adults 50 years and older so don't skip over that article.
Patients expect us to keep up-to-date with recommendations so read why we need to be ready for the 2000-2001 flu season.

Please don't be shy and contact the district office with comments, suggestions, and even to volunteer your energy to make this newsletter better.
We welcome any ideas that will promote the mission of this newsletter "to provide information to the membership".

Professionally yours,
Claudia L. Koppelman, M.D.
Editor

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ATTENTION !!!

Special Notice for Retired Physicians

The Hampden District Medical Society is not only a society which exists for practicing physicians but which should be thought of as a Society for all physicians.
There are many retired physicians who may feel isolated from their colleagues. To encourage our retired physicians to keep in contact with one another or perhaps help with or develop community projects that will benefit everyone involved the Executive committee wants you to know that the district office conference room is available for meetings.
To express your interest in creating or participating in this group or to request room availability please contact:

Suzanne Skibinski, Exec Director at (413)736-0661

HDMS:

State of the Society Address

Presented at the Annual Meeting May 2, 2000

It is with great satisfaction that I can report tonight that HDMS is in fine shape. Over the past 18 months I have worked closely with our Executive Director to organize and stream line operations. A priority item on my presidential agenda was to computerize the District Office.

An additional work station was obtained, thanks to MMS's need to upgrade computers in Waltham. Not only did this enable us to be more efficient with respect to membership data, but has brought the district office into the 21st century with cyberspace potentials. Communications via e-mail has enhanced productivity by saving time and gas, with less interruptions in physician office schedules and more importantly, the ability for night owls like me to address district issues at any hour night or day.

Tackling the job of revising our Bylaws, was made easier with e-mail communications. Final review obtained from Dean Nicastro, Chief Legal Counsel for the MMS facilitated my ability to present The Amended May 2000 Version to the Exec Committee last week and to the membership tonight. Printing district notices, letters and announcements for members can now be done at the district office rather than by subcontractors. Quik Books software allows financial data to be readily available with simply a few keystrokes.

The Hampden Hippocrat's reincarnation as a newsletter can be attributed to computerizing the office along with the dedicated efforts of our Executive Director Suzanne Skibinski, Administrative Assistant Rosanna Czermack and yours truly.....

Add to all this the savings from cancellation of extraneous service contracts and lower cost negotiated contracts on office equipment, as well as the office space rental agreement, we have been able to drastically reduce the expenses of HDMS while becoming markedly more productive.

I happily report that expenses have been reduced by close to 25K. With our House in order and having the necessary data available a review of the district dues structure another goal I aimed to achieve can now be addressed. This issue will be referred to the Membership and Executive Committees for analysis so stayed tuned...

As member participation and interest in serving the Society increased over the past two years, each physician on Hampden District's delegation to the MMS House of Delegates was specifically asked if they desired to continue as a delegate or not. Along with new faces on the delegation, this year HDMS will not go unnoticed...Each delegate at the Annual MMS House of Delegates meeting coming up on May 18-19 will be wearing our district logo on a fashionable and practical jacket. Don't worry I didn't spend all 25 grand on Burberry Sport coats, besides this is Western Massachusetts.

During the past year media exposure has increased for physicians by focusing on patient advocacy with the indirect benefit of educating the public as well as giving us the opportunity to project a positive image for physicians. The pinnacle of media exposure was the unsolicited printing in the Sunday Republican March 26th edition of the entire unedited speech I delivered to the membership at our Winter meeting.

It's all in the 'sound bites' you emphasize. Regardless of the question, the answer must include the same message. The message repetitively being given emphasizing patient's first has been finally heard. It is imperative that we continue to respond to the media's new found interest in printing and broadcasting the Voice of Medicine . And when it comes to answering "what does the Society do for me?" One of our most important activities is developing excellent relationships with our local officials and State Legislators. In fact, at MMS Headquarters, Hampden District is known for holding the best attended and interactive Legislative Breakfasts in the State. This Friday HDMS will be sponsoring our annual Legislative Breakfast at BMC with over 60 members registered to attend and a full compliment of legislators or their staff.

In conclusion, Hampden District Medical Society, through the dedicated work of staff and physician members, has entered the new millennium prepared to face the challenges the profession has yet to encounter in order to continue our mission of advocacy to promote and protect the health of the public and elevate the standards of medical practice.

Respectfully presented to the membership in accordance with Section 6.01(k) of the Amended May 2, 2000 HDMS Bylaws by Dr. Claudia L. Koppelman, President.

Annual Meeting Business

Please be advised the Amended May 2, 2000 Bylaws and Rules of Procedure of the Hampden District Medical Society were adopted as presented to the membership with no further amendments. Being such please keep the copy which was mailed to each member prior to HDMS's Annual meeting as the current Bylaws for our District.

The Nomination Slate for officers and Committee members was also accepted as presented to the membership with no further nominations from the floor. Dr. Murthy volunteered to represent HDMS as a district delegate to the MMS House of Delegates thereby filling the last remaining position available. We have to date 21 delegates of 30 registered to attend the upcoming MMS Annual House of Delegates. The District will be well represented. Thank you to all members for your participation.

Executive Director Plus…

Every leader needs a right hand person, in this case HDMS is fortunate to have an ambidextrous Executive Director.

Dedicated, **I**maginative, **R**esourceful, **E**nergetic, **C**ompassionate, **T**rustworthy, **O**rganized and **R**eliable.

Taking the first letter of each word spells out Director. Suzanne Skibinski definitely has the characteristics it takes to be a director. At the Annual meeting she was recognized for having performed her role as HDMS Executive Director above and beyond the call of duty. Ms. Suzanne Skibinski definitely projects an image befitting the Medical Society.

On behalf of the membership Dr. Koppelman acknowledged her fine work and thanked her for her dedication to the mission of Hampden District Medical Society.

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"HDMS Congratulates Our 50 Year MEMBERS"

Dr. Aloysius Bloniarz

Dr. John W. Pillion

Dr. George A. Sotirian

How many more years will we have the honor of being able to present this Award of Achievement. Fifty years as a member of Hampden District Medical Society translates into many more years in medicine itself. With the changing healthcare environment and mounting pressures on the profession physicians are diversifying their interests and are learning that life does exist outside of medicine.

Last year we had eight physicians to honor. This year we have three 50 Year Members. As I stated last year, they dedicated their careers to helping others. They are the physicians who taught the next generation of physicians who passed their knowledge on to the next, and...so on... They are a link in the continuum of time reaching back to Hippocrates and forward to discoveries yet to be made by physicians yet to be born.

Apropos to the concept on time, on behalf of Hampden District Medical Society I was pleased to present our 50 year members a Rosewood Mantel Clock, personalized with a brass name plate acknowledging their achievement along with a 50 year Certificate.

Two of our 50 year members were unable to attend the Annual meeting. ***Dr. John Pillion*** resides in Florida. It's still too cold up here. His clock and certificate were mailed to him. ***Dr. George Sotirian*** a resident now of the Holyoke Soldiers Home was also unable to attend the presentation. We were pleased to be able to honor ***Dr. Aloysius Bloniarz*** at the Annual meeting. Dr. Rao presented him with his gift and certificate. The membership gave him a standing ovation for his achievement.

MASSACHUSETTS MEDICAL SOCIETY and HAMPDEN DISTRICT

RECOGNIZES

Claudia L. Koppelman, M.D.

COMMUNITY CLINICIAN OF THE YEAR 2000

This award recognizes a member of the district who stands out as a leader, an advocate and a caregiver and has made significant contributions to patients and the community.
HDMS chose *Dr. Claudia L. Koppelman* to be their 1st *Community Clinician of the Year* award recipient as she exemplifies all the characteristics represented by this award.
Patients, physicians, nurses and friends all describe her as a caring, compassionate and dedicated physician willing to do whatever is necessary to practice good medicine.
Some would think that advocating for patients and the medical profession is her full time job, but she runs a very busy private solo practice in Internal Medicine in Holyoke, Massachusetts. Preserving the "Art of Practicing Medicine" is the underlying force from which her incredible energy and dedication arises.
Since 1993 Dr. Koppelman has participated in organized medicine as a strong leader in helping to shape the future.
At the district level she is a member of the Medical-Legal Committee, Executive Committee and a delegate to the MMS House of Delegates where she has consistently written and introduced resolutions. For the past two years she has been President of HDMS.
Since 1995 she has served as Hampden's Alternate Trustee to the MMS Board of Trustees and was recently elected to be the Trustee. Appointments to important MMS committees include: Finance, Nominations, Interprofessional Relations, Subcommittee of the MMS-MBA Liaison Committee and Women in Organized Medicine. She was recently named Chair of the Task Force on Patient Care:Nurse-Physician Teamwork.

Her straightforward apolitical attitude has been admired by her colleagues and won her an elected position on the Board of Trustee's Committee on Long Range Planning.
From being a chairperson of a reference committee, leader of a patient care team or simply one on one with patients Dr. Koppelman is committed to doing her best no matter how much time it takes.
On the National level she is Holyoke Hospital's representative to the Organized Medical Staff Section of the AMA.

The following are excerpts from supporting letters submitted with her nomination:

"...Doctor Koppelman demonstrates in a superb fashion the qualities that are becoming so glaringly absent these days in physicians: care of the whole patient, warm-hearted, hands-on generous with her time, she listens intently and remembers details so remarkably well. Her method reminds me of those wonderful mentors who used to tell me to listen to the patients..."they're telling you what's wrong." She follows her patients closely...She knows their families...all part of the finest care that is becoming extinct these days."

"...Dr. Claudia will not give in to the dictates of the third party and spends enormous amounts of time in supporting her formidable conviction that the third party must not be practicing medicine."

"...She is discretionary in her resorting to technology, she thinks before she refers...nothing is automatic with her."

"...Dr. Koppelman seems to have a reservoir of knowledge and takes that extra time to answer all questions. She is accessible to her patients both day and night."

"...Over the past few months I have seen articles in the newspaper as well as listening to Dr. Koppelman being interviewed on a local radio station about different issues regarding health care and realized not only is she dedicated to her patients but is a leader and has a constant commitment to society."

"...Her remarkable intelligence, wit, initiative and tenacity are recognized and appreciated on the district level...and on the state and national levels, where I have admired the clarity and intelligence with which she discusses those issues which affect us and those which protect the rest of us in the trenches."

"...Physicians are recognized on 'Doctor Appreciation Day' by being given a red carnation. The flower signifies *honorary distinction* and the color red denotes *love, charity, sacrifice and courage*. This describes Dr. Koppelman."

"...I am delighted that there exists an award which seems so appropriate for Dr. Koppelman."

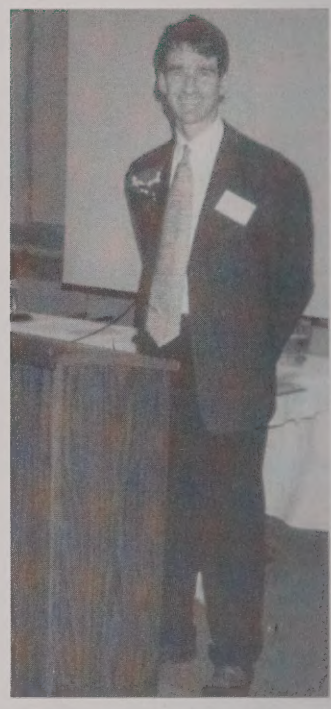
Hampden District Medical Society commends

Claudia L. Koppelman, M.D.

for her outstanding compassion, dedication and commitment to patients, community and the medical profession.
She was presented the award at the Annual District Meeting on May 2, 2000.

Highlights of 1999-2000

"Girl Scouts of Today Physicians of Tomorrow " June 1999
Dr. Ross, Program Chair, Dr. Mateen and Interns



"15 Annual Medical-Ethics Seminar"
Dr. Whitcomb, Director Int. Medicine
Mercy Hospital, October 1999

Dr. Maura Brennan, BMC Medicine/Geriatrics poses for a picture with HDMS President at the Fall District Meeting, September 1999

Fall District Meeting, September 1999 "Tai Chi"
Drs. Murthy and Gordan participate in demonstration

Dr. Claudia L. Koppelman, President HDMS being interviewed by News 22 Health Care Proxy Proclamation Day, City Hall Springfield, November 1999

Health Care Proxy Proclamation Day Program Speakers: Sr. Betsy Sullivan Springfield Mayor Michael Albano; Dr. Claudia Koppelman,Pres. HDMS; Dr. Virginia Latham,Pres-elect MMS; John Bagley, Past-President HBA

Despite a winter snow storm HDMS's Winter District Meeting was honored to have as our guest speaker Dr. Randolph Smoak, Jr. AMA President-elect who is seen here speaking with Dr. Harry Greene, II, MMS Executive V.P.

Dr. Koppelman, President HDMS had the pleasure of presenting the First HDMS "1999 Senior Volunteer Physician of the Year" Award to Dr.Alonzo Sheffield at the Winter District Meeting on January 26, 2000.

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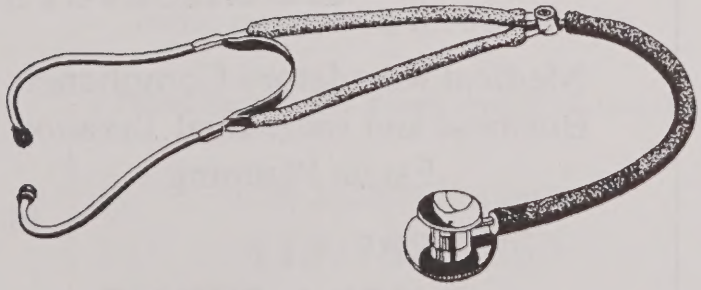

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Tuesday, May 16 • Thursday, May 25
Tuesday, May 30

REFRESHMENTS
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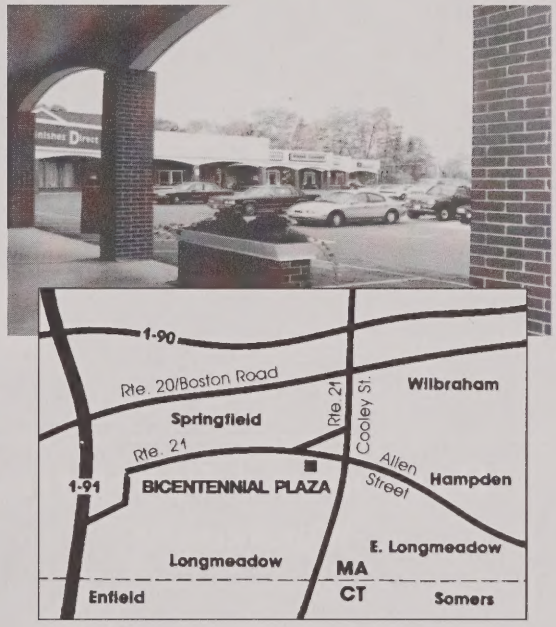

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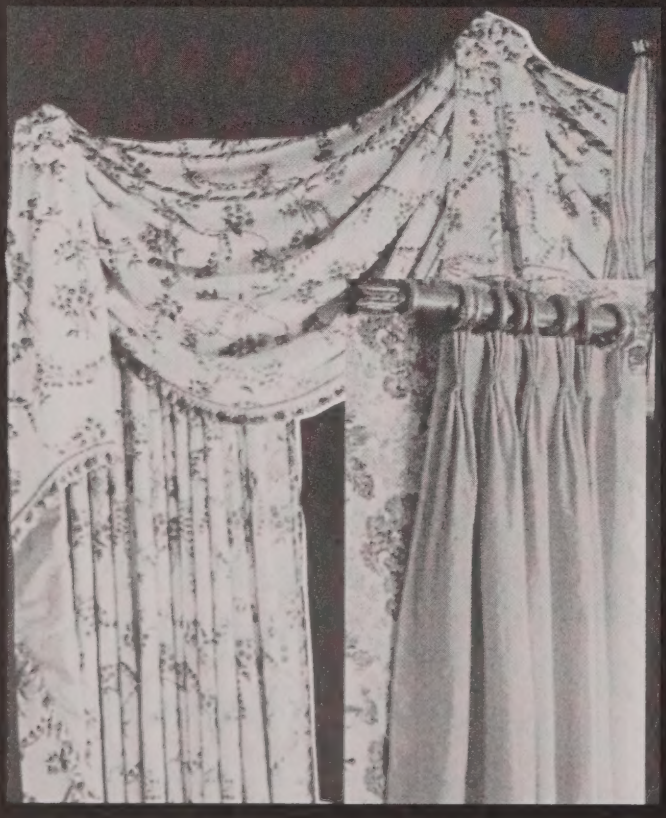

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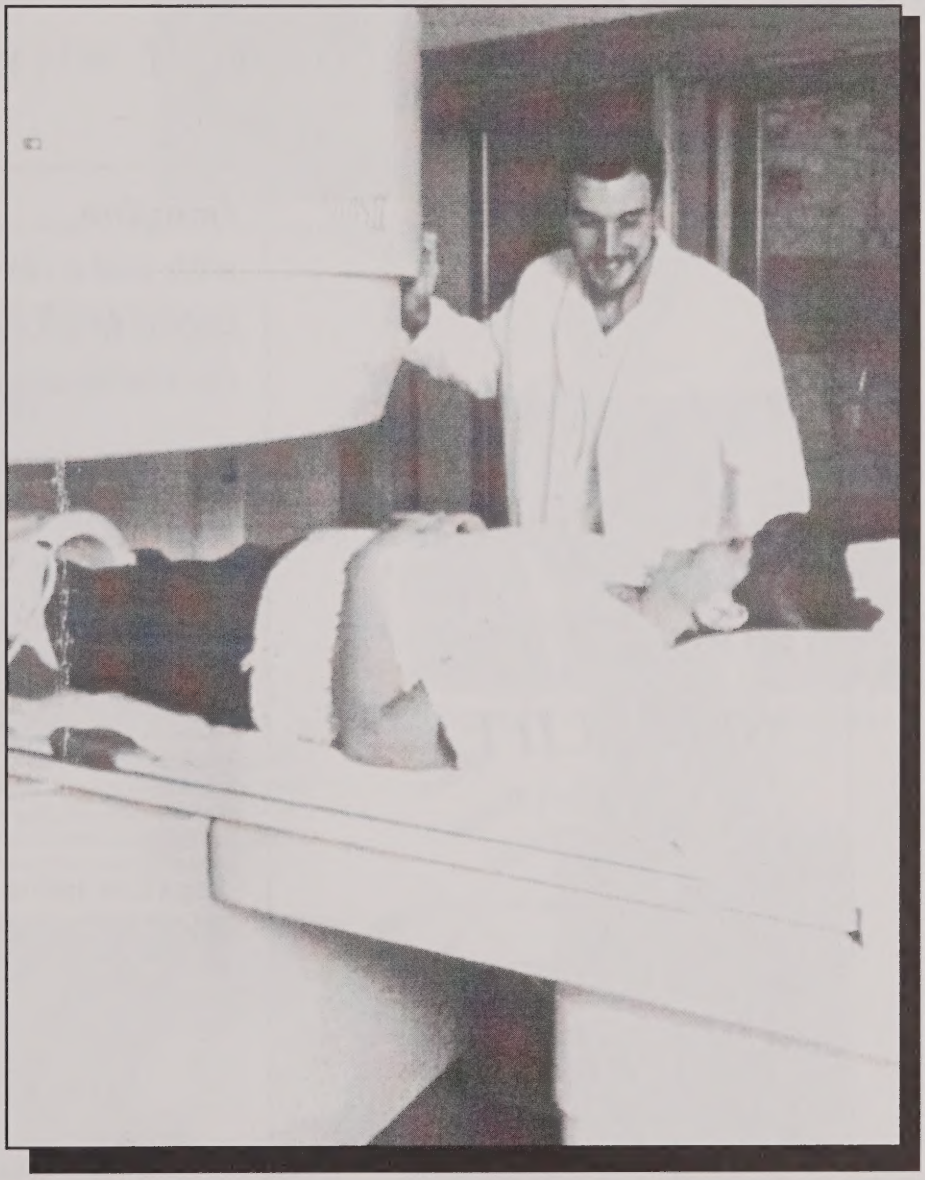
Open MRI at Mercy Hospital

Mercy Hospital and Alliance Imaging are pleased to announce the addition of a new open MRI unit. Our new Hitachi system is open on all sides, providing for greater patient comfort. The open-air gantry design allows for scanning of the most demanding cases, such as anxious, claustrophobic and large patients. Our new unit, coupled with our existing GE high field strength system, has allowed Mercy Hospital and Alliance Imaging to remain the area's leading provider of MRI services.



Why refer your patients to Mercy Hospital MRI?

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- **seven-day-a-week service.**

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For more information about Mercy Hospital's new open MRI, call (413) 739-0290 or, toll-free, 1-800-634-2468.

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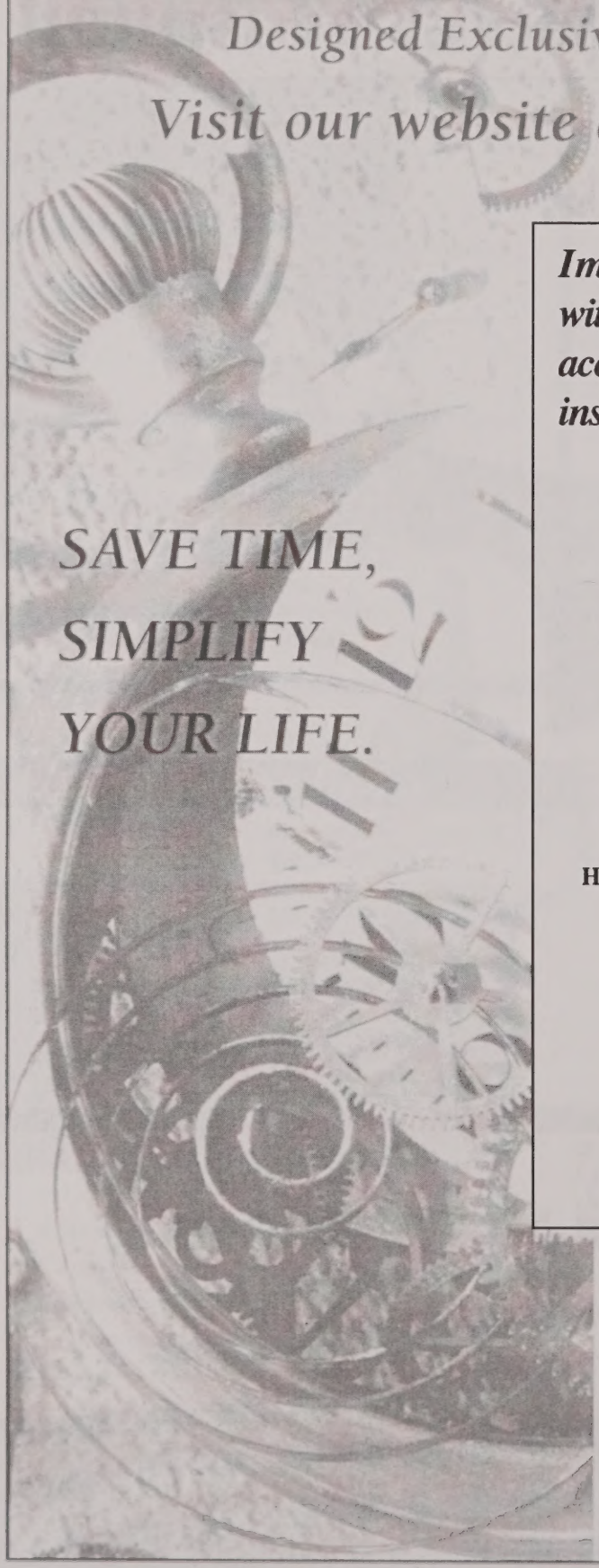

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A Subsidiary of the Massachusetts Medical Society

More Highlights of 1999-2000

DOCTOR APPRECIATION DAY MARCH 30TH 2000

Red Carnation flowers signify Honorary Distinction and are a symbol of Love, Charity, Sacrifice and Courage

Dr. DiGiacomo is seen here being recognized on Doctor Appreciation Day by HDMS's Executive Director Ms. Suzanne Skibinski

Dr. Jean Taladi with Cindy Anderson,R.N.

Resident's are honored too!
Drs. Ryan Trombly, James Yu
Marjorie Garrett

HDMS Delegates proudly wearing District Jackets at the MMS Annual House of Delegates May 2000
Drs. Sankey, George, Koppelman, Gordan, Wint, Hellerman, Tauber, Lesser, Mitchell, Metz, Hall, Solomon, Siragusa, Ross, Asinas, Rao.

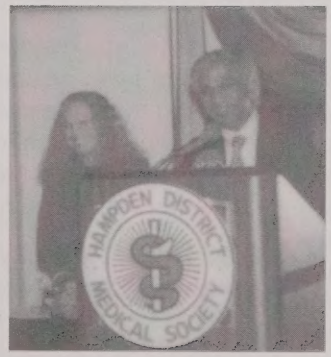
Dr. Rao with 50 Year Member Dr. Aloysius Bloniarz

Dr. Sankey, Secretary and Dr. Wang, Pres-elect are enjoying the Annual 2000 Meeting Program

Dr. Mandel was honored to present to Dr. Koppelman HDMS's 1st "Community Clinician of the Year" Award at the Annual District Meeting May 2, 2000

Passing of the Presidential Gavel to HDMS's159th President, Dr. Rao

& Accepting the Job!



Dr. Koppelman proudly shows the membership the gift she was presented in appreciation for her hard labor as HDMS's President 1998-2000,
(a rock...upon which the bronze sculpture is displayed)

Influenza Pandemic Planning In Massachusetts Are We Ready?

An influenza pandemic occurs when a novel and highly contagious strain of the influenza virus emerges, affecting populations around the world. It has been more than 30 years since the last pandemic and many experts consider another pandemic to be inevitable. In this century, the most severe pandemic occurred in 1918-1919, when at least 20 million people died worldwide. Less severe pandemics occurred in 1957, resulting in 116,000 deaths in the U.S. alone, and 1968, when 98,000 Americans died of influenza-related illness.

Two recent episodes remind us of the influenza virus's capacity to evolve into potentially dangerous strains. In 1997, 18 people in Hong Kong were infected with an avian influenza virus (H5N1), resulting in six deaths. In April 1999, there were two confirmed cases caused by another avian influenza virus (H9N2). Neither virus resulted in sustained person-to-person transmission. However, when avian and human strains of influenza virus circulate in the community at the same time, there is the potential for exchange of genetic material between strains and the emergence of a new strain with increased pathogenicity and enhanced person-to-person spread. These recent episodes were reminiscent of how earlier pandemics began and remind us that it is just a matter of time before we are faced with another influenza pandemic.

In Massachusetts alone, the Department of Public Health estimates that the next pandemic could result in up to 2.2 million cases of influenza, 1 million outpatient visits, 18,000 hospitalizations and 6,000 deaths over the course of several months. During a pandemic, vaccines, antiviral medications and antibiotics to treat secondary infections likely will be in short supply; health care and public safety workers will be at increased risk for exposure and illness; and existing medical facilities may be quickly overwhelmed.

The Massachusetts Department of Public Health, in collaboration with the Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency (MEMA) and the Massachusetts Health Officers Association, is developing a plan to prepare for a pandemic. This plan will be used as a model for responding to any biological public health emergency. Local officials are also being encouraged to develop plans for responding to the pandemic in their communities. Physicians and hospitals are encouraged to collaborate with their local boards of health and public safety and emergency response officials to ensure that every community is prepared for the pandemic.

In order to reduce the annual toll from influenza, and to increase awareness of the importance of influenza vaccine in preventing disease, it is important to increase influenza immunization rates of high-risk groups now. Currently in Massachusetts, two thirds of persons younger than 65 years of age with a chronic medical condition do not receive annual influenza vaccine. All primary care providers are reminded that influenza vaccine is recommended for anyone six months of age and older with medical conditions that put them at risk for complications of influenza, including asthma and diabetes.

In addition, one of the most concrete steps we can take to protect people now and to mitigate the effects of a future influenza pandemic is to ensure that everyone at risk for pneumococcal disease receive a pneumococcal vaccine. Pneumococcal pneumonia is one of the most common complications of influenza and pneumococcal disease results in the deaths of 10,000–15,000 adults in the United States every year. Currently in Massachusetts, 48% of people 65 years of age and older have never received a pneumococcal vaccine, 80% pneumococcal vaccine. Immunizing high-risk individuals with pneumococcal vaccine will protect them now and during a pandemic. For more information contact:

Donna Lazorik, RN
Massachusetts Immunization Program
Massachusetts Department of Health
(617) 983-6800

****

ALERT

Now is the time to begin planning

for the 2000-2001 Flu Season

Recent change in the recommendations for use of flu vaccine makes it imperative that we begin planning early for the next flu season. The Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) recently recommended that ***everyone 50 years of age and older should receive an annual influenza vaccine.*** This new recommendation, together with the perceived severity of the 1999-2000 flu season will likely result in increased demand for flu vaccine next fall.

For more information on purchasing vaccine contact the MIP Vaccine Unit at:
(617)983-6828
or directly call the pharmaceutical companies to place an order:
Aventis Pasteur 1-800-822-2463
Wyeth-Lederle 1-800-358-7443

****

The Pharmacy Program Plus

Serving elders and peoples with disabilities

The Commonwealth's new **Pharmacy Program *Plus*** provides an unlimited prescription benefit for elders and younger people with disabilities who incur high prescription costs relative to their incomes.

This **one-year** program associated with Senior Pharmacy Program runs from :

January 1, 2000 to December 31, 2000

Who is Eligible?

* Massachusetts residents
* Age 65 or over, **or** under age 65 work less than 40 hours per month and meet the disability guidelines for CommonHealth.
* Gross annual household income <$41,220 (individual) or $55,320 (two-person household)
* additional conditions must be met

For full eligibility information & How to Apply
call toll free **1-800-AGE-INFO (1-800-243-4636)**
or **TTY: 1-800-813-7787**

****

EHRLICHIOSIS

NOT ALL TICK-BORNE DISEASES = LYME DISEASE

Ehrlichiosis ~ Rocky Mountain NON-spotted Fever

Three emerging tick -borne diseases you need to be aware exist

Human ehrlichiosis is a tick-borne systemic febrile illness which clinically resembles RMSF minus the rash. A relatively new tick-borne illness, being first described in 1986, is probably more common than previously recognized.

Ehrlichiosis should be included in the differential diagnosis of any patient who presents with nonspecific flu-like febrile illness and a history of a tick bite or has a high probability of having been exposed to ticks. Especially if leukopenia, thrombocytopenia, lymph-openia, and mild to moderate elevations in hepatic transaminases are noted on laboratory studies.

Ehrlichiosis is caused by small (.5-1.5 mu) gram-negative, pleomorphic, obligate intracellular organisms of the genus Ehrlichia. After being transmitted by arthropod bite into the skin and phagocytosed by circulating leukocytes they reproduce intracellularly and form a microcolony of elementary bodies called a *morula.* The mor-ulae rupture releasing elementary bodies into the circulation which infect other leukocytes…
Which type of leukocyte predominantly is infected allows for differentiation of *Ehrlichia* species in the family Rickettsiaceae.

Human monocytic ehrlichiosis (HME)	**Human granulocytic ehrlichiosis (HGE)**	**New human ehrlichiosis agent**
1st described in 1986	1st described in 1999	1st described in 1999
Ehrlichia chaffeenis	unknown Ehrlichia species	Ehrlichia ewingii
targets macrophages	targets granulocytes	targets granulocytes
Lone star tick and American dog tick	Deer tick and American dog tick	Lone star tick
Mortality 2-5%	Mortality 7-10%	?
Hospitalization rates: as high as 65%	Hospitalization rates: 28-54%	

Clinical Presentation: (similar for HME, HGE, Ehrlichia ewingii)

Most Frequent	**Frequent**	**Occasional**
Fevers >90%	Nausea 40%	Hypotension
Headaches >85%	Vomiting 40%	Conjunctivitis
Malaise >70%	Diarrhea	Pharyngitis
Myalgias >70%	Anorexia 40%	Prolonged fever
Rigors 60%	Confusion 20%	ARDS
	Abdominal Pain	Toxic Shock
	Arthralgias	Lymphadenopathy
	Cough/Dyspnea	Myocardial complications (LVDilatation)

A rash occurs in <10% and can occur anywhere on the body not necessarily at the site of the tick bite.
Onset of symptoms can occur from 0 to 34 days after tick exposure, but on average begin after about one week to ten days with the abrupt onset of fever (can be >39ϒ C), rigors and myalgias.

Differential Dx:

Tick-borne illnesses include Babesiosis, Lyme and Rocky Mountain Spotted Fever. Depending on the organ systems most affected the differential diagnosis can be narrowed down, but due to the nonspecific nature of the presenting clinical picture a long list of infectious diseases must be entertained. Ehrlichiosis may also mimic the clinical presentation of collagen vascular diseases and malignancies of the hematopoeitic system. Coinfection with other tick-borne illnesses is a possibility and should be considered.

Workup:

CBC with Differential is important. Will see leukopenia with a left shift and thrombocytopenia and frequently anemia.
Liver Profile often will reveal a mild to moderate elevation of SGOT and SGPT leaving the other liver parameters within normal range.
Hyponatremia, elevated ESR and elevated BUN and creatinine levels frequently are noted.
It is difficult to visualize the *morulae* in peripheral granulocytes, and they are not seen in monocytes.
Indirect Fluorescent Antibody (IFA) testing is the most sensitive confirmatory diagnostic test available at this time to diagnose HME and HGE.

Treatment:

Treatment should not be delayed pending confirmatory lab results. Initiation of antibiotics must be started as soon as possible especially if there is a strong suspicion of ehrlichiosis. Doxycycline is the only known antibiotic to have been proven effective.

Doxycycline 100mg po BID in the outpatient setting.

Doxycycline 100 mg IV BID if hospitalization is necessary.

Antibiotic treatment needs to be given until after defervescence plus three days with a minimal recommended treatment course of 7 days. If Lyme coinfection is suspected or known to be involved an appropriate longer course of antibiotic treatment should be prescribed per current Lyme disease recommendations.

Prevention & Deterrence:

Wear light colored clothing and be fashionable by tucking your pants into your socks when enjoying nature up close and personal. Long sleeved shirts are also recommended.
Insect repellent can be helpful too.
Most of all regular body examinations for ticks and prompt removal is important. Remove ticks by forceps. More frequent contact and longer duration of tick attachment presumably will increase the opportunity of transmission of the ehrlichia organism.

High Risk Locations & Season:

New England is definitely a high risk location for Lyme disease and also **Ehrlichiosis**.
A warm winter and wet spring will bring the deer tick nymphs out earlier than normal, but in general May through August is the time period your risk for exposure to Ehrlichiosis is the highest.

Written by Claudia L. Koppelman, M.D.

This page may be copied and used as a patient handout.

MMS Annual Meeting

May 18 - 20, 2000

HDMS was not only well represented at the Annual meeting this year, but our delegation received a lot of attention. Our embroidered Hampden district logo on the green polar fleece jackets were a big hit. Besides keeping us warm they set us apart from other districts.

Business before the House was definately not as controversial as last year. Issues on patient care safety, universal healthcare, and fluorination of water were addressed along with the delegates approval for two important conferences to be held this coming Fall.

A governance/organizational retreat to address strategic planning along with refinement of governance for the Society and a second conference in October 2000 which would facilitate serious discussions including from where resources to support various system proposals will come.

The time has truly come to present a comprehensive set of options for the implementation and achievement of universal health care in a practical and not philosophical context. Other important resolutions were adopted reaffirming the MMS's support of medical students and residents. For a complete review of A-00 resolutions please contact either the MMS or the district office for assistence.

For the standing room only crowd who participated in the Ethics Forum on Thursday afternoon the discussions were educational.

Topics included: On-line Prescription Medication Purchasing, Misrepresentation for the Benefit of the Patient, Medical Errors, Physician Derision and Objurgation and Use of Chaperones during Physical Exams.

Friday evening's entertainment was enjoyed by all who attended Mark Russell's performance. Immune system boost plus which was followed by the President's reception and "Members Art Exhibit".

The Annual Educational Program left attendees with more questions than solutions.The presenters included two economists which painted a dismal picture of the future for " Restoring Health to Our Health System" simply because (as they say in Washington) it's politics!

The third member of the panel, a psychiatrist gave a more practical perspective and clinically relevant talk on "survival" and the roles that stress and one's ability to deal with stress plays.

The Annual Shattuck Lecture Luncheon was given by Dr. Stanley B. Prusiner, M.D. on " Lessons from Prion Diseases/ Neurodegenerative Disorders".

Saturday night the formal program began with a cocktail hour followed by the Presidential Ceremony and Banquet. Entertainment by the Trinity Irish Dance Company was definately unique and was followed by dancing to the Winiker Orchestra.

clk

Dr. Koppelman and her husband Mr. Jack McQuaide are all smiles at the Annual MMS Banquet. She is officially HDMS's Past-President.....

AMA National Leadership Conference

Traditionally HDMS sends their President-elect to the AMA National Leadership Conference and this year we were proud to have Dr. K.V.R. Mohan Rao represent us. The conference was held March 25-28 in Miami, Fla. The overall theme of this year's meeting was:

"Is it Good Medicine"

Having the opportunity to talk with physicians from around the country gave Dr. Rao a different perspective of professional life elsewhere and he reported to the Executive committee, "...we think it's bad in Massachusetts, we actually are much better off than most physicians..."

Mrs. Bill Moyers was one of the featured speakers at the conference who spoke on the topic of death and dying, **"On Our Own Terms, Moyers on Dying"**.

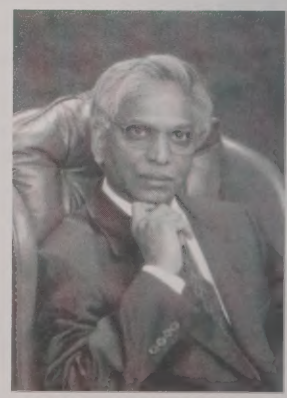
The program will be presented this Fall as a Major PBS Four-Part Series which is scheduled to air September 10-13, 2000 9 - 10:30 p.m. (ET).

Program I: Living with Dying
Program II: A Different Kind of Care
Program III: A Death of One's Own
Program IV: A Time to Change

Dr. Rao was fortunate to hear her speak in person and also had an opportunity to talk with her after the program

Introducing:

HDMS's Incoming President



No matter how much time and energy each individual member can afford to give, to succeed all leaders need followers to accomplish a goal.

To all those who actively participated on committees, to all those who attended meetings and to all those who participate in the voice of medicine by simply being a member,HDMS thanks you. Although it has been an honor to have served as HDMS's President the past two years, I gladly became past-president as I handed over the presidential gavel to Dr. K.V.R. Mohan Rao, well not exactly, he received his own name engraved gavel, at the Annual Meeting.

According to the MMS Bylaws Dr. Rao officially takes office as HDMS's 159th President immediately after the MMS Annual Meeting on May 19, 2000.

Obituaries

May 31, 1936 – January 9, 2000

William D. Kiss, M.D., an internist practicing in Springfield since 1966, passed away at Mercy Hospital. He was on the active staff of Baystate Medical Center and Mercy Hospital. He graduated from Columbia College and Down State Medical Center, settling in Longmeadow in 1967.

A TRIBUTE FOR MY FRIEND, WILLIAM D. KISS

The Man form La Mancha would readily have been put to shame
By a "Man for All Seasons "William D. Kiss, M.D. was his name
Never at a loss for a humorous or insightful remark
Bill's perception and candor were always on the mark

Devoted husband and father and incredible friend
He had the ability his practice and personal life to blend
Well versed on any topic you might wish to discuss
Bill could recall little known pertinent details without any fuss

A scholar and dedicated physician beyond reproach
One of his strongest qualities was how easy Bill was to approach
Bill always looked beyond the surface probing for an underlying cause
As he intently listened you could see his wheels turning as he overtly paused

To reflect on the content and read between the lines
In an earnest, heartfelt attempt a solution to find
When no resolution was easy to reach
Bill was there for advice and to teach

A heart as large as he was with a twinkle in his eye
That manifested an indomitable spirit always thinking and assessing why
Possessing a wit and creativity seldom seen
There was always something special from his words to glean

Bill loved Vicki, Karolyn, and Katie with his whole being and heart
He wouldn't have changed any of them not even one small part
When he spoke of them or their accomplishments one could sense his pride
A remarkable man not wanting his feelings to hide

Bill looked beyond the surface and penetrated your very core
He had boundless understanding and compassion galore
There was always a certain look or glance
That let you know he understood not just by chance

Everything Bill did was intense
Yet he lived his life without pretense
An advocate and mediator of enormous skill
Cloaked in a quick witted man everyone knew as "Bill"

We will all miss this truly "One of a kind" man
We sadly relinquish you, William, because it's God's Divine Plan
You will always remain in our hearts
Your wit, wisdom, and spirit will never depart.

By: Audrey D. Botnick

June 9, 1911 – January 10, 2000

Sigmund J. Posner, M.D., a fifty-year member of the Massachusetts Medical Society, a Charter Fellow of the American Academy of Family Physicians, a Mason, and a Shriner passed away in Sarasota, Florida. In 1940 he established a practice in Ludlow and retired in 1977. He served as Chief of Staff at Ludlow Hospital. He worked as a part-time volunteer for the Manatee County Board of Health in Florida during fourteen years of his retirement.

July 20, 1921 – January 11, 2000

Stanley Rapinchuk, M.D. died in Mission St Joseph's Hospital in North Carolina. He served in the Army Medical Corps during World War II and founded the first mental health clinic in Springfield. He served as Chief of Psychiatry at Springfield Hospital, practicing for thirty-seven years prior to his retirement in 1988.

May 18, 1918 – February 26, 2000

Stanley M. Baum, M.D. passed away at a nursing home in West Palm Beach, Florida. He was a family practitioner in Springfield and was affiliated with the city's high schools from 1944 until his retirement in 1981. Doctor Baum was an Army captain in the Korean War and was awarded the Purple Heart and Bronze Star. He was a life member of the Academy of Medicine.

March 25, 1914 – January 26, 2000

Field Case Leonard, M.D., a pioneer in vascular surgery and the first general practitioner to do vascular surgery in Springfield, passed away at Wing Memorial Hospital in Palmer. He graduated from Harvard Medical School in 1940. He served as Chief Surgeon in 1954 and Chief Vascular Surgeon from 1965 to 1970 at Wesson Memorial Hospital. He was an Army captain in World War II, serving in the Medical Corps with the Second Infantry and was awarded the Bronze Star with battle stars.

New Members

INTERNAL MEDICINE
Marcia L. Lewis

GERIATRICS
Guido A. Navarra

ENDOCRONOLOGY
Robert J. Cooper

OB/GYN
Ilan D. Bornstein
Ruth A. Pryor
Richard Clark Cook

RADIOLOGY
Dennis DeJesus

PATHOLOGY
Donna Rose

Senior Status

H.Douglas Barnshaw, M.D
Ralph E. Giannelly

****

ATTENTION !!! DOCTORS !!! ATTENTION !!!

Don't Forget to Contact the HDMS Office if you change your medical office/practice address to be sure your file is updated.

ATTENTION !!! DOCTORS !!! ATTENTION !!!

****

The Officers, Executive Committee and Staff of
Hampden District Medical Society
wish everyone a safe and fun filled Summer

The Fall edition of "The Hampden Hippocrat" will be published in September
Articles, announcements, interesting stories and information to share with HDMS members may be submitted for publication consideration to the: "The Hampden Hippocrat" Editor
HDMS
1111 Elm Street Suite 22
West Springfield, Ma 01089-1540

or e-mail your material to: hampden@massmed.org

HAMPDEN DISTRICT MEDICAL SOCIETY / MASSACHUSETTS MEDICAL SOCIETY
PHYSICIANS CARING FOR THE CITIZENS OF MASSACHUSETTS

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